

Upton Town Library Board of Trustees
Remote “Go To Meeting”
February 22, 2021
Minutes

The Upton Town Library Board of Trustees’ regular monthly remote meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. The Library Trustees participating remotely were:

Debbie Amorelli
Michelle Antinarelli
Charlotte Carr
Judith Katz
Anne O’Brien--absent
John Robertson, Jr.
Bill Taylor (Chair of the Trustees and Organizer of the meeting)
Sadie Van Buren
Laurie Wodin

Also participating in the meeting remotely:

Matthew Bachtold, Upton Library Director
Lyn Haggerty, Citizen of Upton

Chairman Bill Taylor read aloud the following statement:

“Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Upton will be conducted via call in, or other similar option. In the event we are unable to accommodate the same, despite best efforts, we will post recorded sessions of the meeting as soon as possible following the same.”

1. Review Agenda

John Robertson, Jr. made a motion “to accept the agenda as printed.” The motion was seconded by Michelle Antinarelli and was approved unanimously by a roll call vote of the Trustees.

2. Presentation/Discussion Regarding Article 26 of the Draft Warrant for the May 6, 2021 Annual Town Meeting

Lyn Haggerty, citizen of Upton and accessibility advocate, presented a proposal for a ramp and entrance to the first floor of the Knowlton-Risteen Building in order to provide access for all citizens to the Upton Public Library. The article on the draft warrant for the May 6, 2021 Annual Town Meeting is as follows:

Article 26:

“To see if the town will vote to fund from free cash an accessible ramp and entrance into the first floor of the Risteen Building in the amount of forty-five thousand dollars (\$45,000.00) or any other amount to provide immediate access to the Upton Public Library.”

Lyn Haggerty prefaced her presentation by asking the Trustees to consider voting for this article. Lyn pointed out that if the article for the proposed Community Center fails at Town Meeting, the Knowlton-Risteen Building must be made accessible. Even if the proposed Community Center is approved, it will take over a year to build. Even if the proposed Community Center is approved, the Knowlton-Risteen building is a public building which is required to have ADA compliant access.

Lyn Haggerty estimated the cost of the metal ramp to be \$45,000. She included funding to install an appropriate door, hardware for opening the door, and to widen the doorway between the Gathering Room and the rest of the library if the ramp is installed at the rear entrance as picture in her presentation.

This proposed ramp would allow wheelchair access so all people in the town could have the full experience being in the library, but as Lyn acknowledged this is not a full accessibility solution to the building. Lyn Haggerty reminded the Board that the Library does not qualify for Cultural Council Grant funding because of its inaccessibility. Any programs that are currently held in the Library are violating ADA laws.

Michelle Antinarelli expressed her support a ramp and this article for funding the ramp, and called attention wording of the article that does not define where the ramp should be installed. Michelle made a motion to endorse this article for the town meeting warrant. It was not carried.

Several Board members expressed the wish that the ramp would go in the front door, rather than in through the Gathering Room door on the parking lot side of the building, which is the location pictured in the presentation, but not necessarily specified by the article Lyn Haggerty is proposing.

John Robertson, Jr. made a motion “to take the ramp proposal as presented by Lyn Haggerty under advisement.”

Michelle Antinarelli wanted clarification on what “under advisement” means. John Robertson, Jr. suggested that we discuss the proposed ramp at the next meeting of the Trustees.

Matthew Bachtold would prefer the ramp to come in the window on the side of the building, though pipe and electrical work may interfere with this placement.

It was noted that Kelly McElreath, as the Town of Upton Facilities Manager, would be the manager of this project.

Lyn Haggerty reported that the Disability Commission has taken no action on the proposed ramp following her presentation to them in 2019. Lyn is scheduled to be on the Disability Commission's agenda in April.

Michelle Antinarelli reminded the Board that the Town's Transition Plan is in progress and won't be ready until August. Grant money from the Massachusetts Office of Disability is not guaranteed because of Covid related impacts on the state budget.

Michelle seconded John Robertson's previous motion to take the request for endorsement under advisement until the next meeting, giving the Board time to have more discussion about the ramp.

Lyn Haggerty brought up the option of renting a ramp. She also told the Board that a front door ramp would not be feasible within a \$45K budget because a lift would be needed to get down the stairs into the library. The lift might not be functional during an emergency.

The Board voted on John Robertson's previous motion "to take the proposed ramp under advisement." The motion was previously seconded by Michelle Antinarelli. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote of the Board.

John Robertson, Jr. expressed his ambiguity regarding this article indicating that if the Community Center article passes at Town Meeting, he would vote against the proposed ramp. He would vote for the proposed ramp if the Community Center article fails.

The Board thanked Lyn Haggerty for her diligence and ongoing work advocating for accessibility to the Library for all citizens of Upton.

3. Criteria for the Re-opening of the Library

A discussion took place about the criteria that will be used to open the library to patrons. Upton was in the "gray" area for Covid cases at the time of this meeting. Matthew Bachtold reported that he would need one a week lead to re-open the library to patrons. Sadie Van Buren suggested checking in at the March 8th meeting of the Trustees, and proposed opening on March 15th if the Covid metrics are still favorable. Michelle Antinarelli asked if any policies for a safe opening should be different from the previous re-opening.

Matthew Bachtold replied that the library's plan for re-opening is a solid plan. However, areas Matthew will revisit in the plan are as follows: (1) the need for putting aside books that have been handled by patrons, (2) browsing time allotment and (3) the quarantine period for returned books which is currently three days. Computer time for patrons and passport application appointments are two topics that patrons inquire about frequently, and will be considered in the future.

Sadie Van Buren suggested that the Board re-evaluates opening procedures, and sets closing criteria if the need to close arises again.

4. Discussion of Hiring Procedures for Employees of Elected Boards

Debbie Amorelli approached the Recreation Commission (of which she is a member) and the Board of Health, and reported that both boards were in agreement that more representation is needed on interview committees for positions within the respective departments. Debbie Amorelli contacted Sandy Hakala, Human Resources Director for the Town of Upton, and Derek Brindisi, Upton Town Manager, to inform them of the Boards' plans. Debbie also asked to be put on the agenda for the next Personnel Committee meeting. Debbie will bring the desired wording for the proposed updated policy to the Personnel Board as well as to the next meeting of the Trustees.

5. Complete Director's 2020 Performance Review

Bill Taylor synthesized the input from the Trustees and included it in Matthew Bachtold's evaluation. Bill will meet with Matthew regarding the evaluation.

John Robertson made a motion "to authorize the chair to sign the performance evaluation on behalf of the Trustees." This motion was seconded by Judith Katz and passed by a majority vote of the Trustees. Bill Taylor abstained.

6. Discuss Next Steps for Completing Mission/Vision/Values Statements

Bill Taylor encouraged the Trustees to read through the draft statements for the next meeting. Michelle Antinarelli will create a Google Doc on which Trustees can suggest edits. In order to abide by opening meeting laws, trustees will not be able to see other Trustees' edits.

7. Updates on Community Center

The Board of Selectmen approved the cost of the Parking Agreement between the Town and the VFW.

Matthew reported that a resident of Upton, Dave Ross, has formed a "Ballot Question Committee" to serve as a Get Out the Vote effort. The ballot question committee is a private political action group that can raise funds and take actions to support or oppose ballot questions. The committee will work closely with Kelly McElreath, Town Clerk, to ensure they are following campaign finance laws and keeping their roles as citizens and as elected officials separate. Trustees may act as private citizens and may participate in this effort.

The Building Committee will hold a Public Hearing at a date to be announced.

8. Review/Approve Minutes from Previous Meeting

John Robertson, Jr. made a motion “to accept the minutes from February 8, 2021, as amended.” This motion was seconded by Laurie Wodin and passed unanimously by a roll call vote of the Trustees.

9. Discuss Time of and Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Trustees will be on March 8, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
At that meeting, the following topics will be on the agenda:

- Library closing criteria
- Re-opening procedures
- Mission/Vision/Value Statements
- Debbie Amorelli will bring wording for proposed personnel policy change
- Ramp discussion
- Matthew will ask Kelly McElreath about state procurement laws regarding the possible rental of a ramp for the Knowlton-Risteen Building
- Matthew will ask Kelly McElreath if she would like to attend our March 8th meeting

10. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chairman 48 Hours in Advance

None

11. Audience Participation

No audience participation

12. Adjournment

Judith Katz made a motion “to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m.” The motion was seconded by John Robertson, Jr. and passed unanimously by a roll call vote of the Trustees.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Carr, Secretary
Upton Town Library Board of Trustees

Documents included/discussed at the February 22, 2021 meeting of the Library Trustees:

- Agenda

- Secretary's Draft Minutes from the February 8, 2021 Meeting of the Trustees
- Upton Covid Case Report 2/18/21
- Director's Performance Review
- Re-opening Status Report of the Library
- Draft Mission Statement and Values September 2020
- Core Values Revisions September 2020
- Upton Community Center Ballot Question Committee email.
- Upton Library FULTI information by-laws from 9/2007